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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT	North Korean Propaganda Used to Persuade Prisoners of War to Return From South Korea	DATE DISTR.	21 September 1953
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SOURCE:

1. In mid-May 1953 the North Korean government, anticipating a truce in the near future, set up a program to persuade North Korean prisoners of war in South Korea to accept repatriation. In Ch'ongjin, the ni People's Committees called on families with prisoners in South Korea; the chairman of the Committee interviewed them and told them that the prisoners hesitated to return to North Korea because of threats by the ROK government, and that the prisoners had no information concerning their families in North Korea.
2. Each family, with a relative who was a prisoner in South Korea, was ordered to write him a letter stating that the family was in good health, leading a good life, and awaiting his repatriation. A photograph, in which the family was ordered to appear happy and well-dressed, was to be enclosed in the letter. Families without good clothing were ordered to borrow clothes from their friends. If a family couldn't afford a photograph, they were ordered to sell some of their belongings to raise the necessary funds. The photographs and letters had to be turned in to the ni People's Committees within a certain period.
3. Whenever a member of a prisoner's family died, a Korean Labor Party member or the chairman of the local People's Committee wrote a letter to prisoners, leaving the prisoner with the belief that the member of his family was still alive. KANG Un-sok (1203/3009/6932), aged 35 and clerk in the Haepang-dong Office in Ch'ongjin, had written many of these letters under the pretense of being a member of some prisoner's family.

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